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To Parents and Teachers

A Message from Washington and Lee to the parents and teachers of its students, that home influence and co-operation, based on more accurate information, may be made more effective.

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TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS

The principles and practice of Washington and Lee are clearly expressed in her official By-Laws.

1. "It shall be the duty of each professor . . . to take a sympathetic and personal interest in the progress, welfare, and development of each student attending his classes."

3. "It is the duty of each teacher to ascertain, and if possible to remove, the causes of failure on the part of every student whose work is unsatisfactory, . . . and to recognize that a part of the blame for indifference, discouragement, and failure on the part of the student must be laid at the door of the teacher himself."

Recognizing, therefore, that the personal conduct, habits, and character-development of each student are within the circle of their official responsibility, the Faculty request the active and energetic sympathy and co-operation of parents and former teachers.

The Regular Reports.

The professors, six weeks after the September opening, hand to the dean their first impressions called the "S.-U reports." Every student receiving U (unsatisfactory) on as many as two studies is summoned for a conference as to the causes of his failure. These preliminary grades are not entered on the college books or sent home.

The University sends to all parents and guardians, and to all preparatory schools during the first college year of their graduates, four regular reports, giving the class-standing and absence record of each student.

The first is a mid-semester report, sent out about November 15th. The second, based on the work and final examinations of the first half-year, is sent to parents and teachers during the first week in February.

The third is the April mid-semester report, based on the work of the first half of the spring semester.

The fourth is sent out a few days after Commencement and contains the spring semester grades, and also the final grades for the whole session. If

any one of these four fails to reach a parent or guardian, a prompt inquiry should be made.

The seven capital letters used by the University in these reports should not be translated into or compared with high-school percentage grades, but rated and interpreted as follows:

A. This is the "honor-roll" grade, marking the recipient a "star" student, belonging at least to the highest ten in a class of 100, and in many departments to the highest five or six.

B. Out of 100 students in any course at Washington and Lee about 33 will reach "B" or "A." A "B" student, therefore, is far above the average, and is to be commended for his scholarship.

C. The "C" men, while differing much among themselves, are doing fairly creditable and satisfactory work.

D. This is the lowest passing mark and represents work below the average. No student can receive a diploma unless at least half his grades are above "D."

E. This grade indicates a failure to pass, but such failure, in the professor's judgment, may be made good by private study and passing a special examination.

F. A student making "F" knows so little of the subject that he must take it over in class to receive any credit toward a degree. Such a complete failure is made on the average by about six men out of every hundred in any regular college course.

I. This is not a grade. It means that for some reason the student's work is *incomplete* and therefore cannot be graded till the omitted or postponed part has been completed.

No grade below "C" should be considered satisfactory, unless it is occasioned by ill-health, weak eyes, outside work to meet expenses, or some other legitimate handicap.

Professors' Explanations.

An unsuccessful student cannot be wisely handled without a diagnosis of his complaint. To apply blame to a case which needs only sympathy and encouragement may prove fatal.

Hence every parent should know what the professor thinks is the cause of his son's failure. To meet this need, and quadruple the meaning and

value of the reports E and F, the professors are asked to attach to these grades one or more of the small letters, a, b, c, etc., each representing a personal opinion as given in the key following:

a. His ill-success seems due mainly to lack of adequate preparation.

b. He was handicapped by late entrance.

c. He has been handicapped by sickness and its resulting absences.

d. Frequent absences have contributed to his lack of success in this study.

e. He is carrying an unusually heavy course, perhaps more than he can manage successfully.

f. He seems to find the course quite difficult, but appears to be working faithfully.

g. From what I have seen of him, he has ample ability to make a success of this course, but lacks determination and diligence.

h. I would attribute his failure mainly to lack of diligence and persistent effort.

i. He seems to lack interest in study and is often inattentive in class.

k. His time and energy seem to be too much taken up with outside campus activities.

l. He gives too much time, I think, to social diversions.

m. He attends to his class exercises, but neglects his laboratory work.

n. He attends to his class exercises, but neglects his parallel work.

o. He seems indolent about getting up in the morning. Should purchase and heed an alarm clock.

x. I have not been able to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to the chief cause of his failure.

It should be recognized that these personal opinions are in some cases based on slight knowledge, and may be at times wholly erroneous. They are very apt to be correct, however, and will, it is hoped, enable parents and teachers to utilize the Washington and Lee reports more wisely and effectively.

Every parent and teacher is reminded that letters of inquiry, however frequent, will receive sympathetic attention and a full and frank reply.



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